

Convention and Tourism Advisory Committee
Tuesday, February 6, 2007 – Minutes

Members Present: Bette Timmel, Kathy Tolbert, Abner Perney, Rosie Leek, Dennis Lauver, Ben Vidricksen

Members Absent: Tricia Weems, Jennifer Sturges

Guests/Staff Present: Keith Rawlings – Salina Bicentennial Center; Mike Harmon – BW Mid America Inn; Sylvia Rice, Tiffany Benien, Jo Ann McClure, Andi Pahl – Chamber Staff

Minutes

The Minutes of the January 2007 meeting were reviewed.

Financial Statement

The December 2006 Financial Statement was reviewed.

Division Updates:

Convention Market

Jo Ann gave the following convention market update:

- **Kansas Land Surveyors** – Jo Ann said the Kansas Land Surveyors convention was a wild success. The staff at the Salina Bicentennial Center, including the new food service manager, met every expectation of the client.
- Jo Ann reported that an ad was placed in a meetings publication but was placed as a second choice ad. Because of the mistake, the ad rep gave us a list of 25 potential meeting planners. Jo Ann also said she has received a hot lead from New York for a 125 person event for October 2007.
- **Kansas Crop Improvement** – Jo Ann will be assisting this group with their event. This is their first time in Salina and the 120 attendees will be here for three days.
- Jo Ann announced that the Courtyard by Marriott is looking for a new general manager and the Holiday Inn Convention Center is seeking a new salesperson.
- Sylvia stated that the “Customer Super Star” program that was initiated last year was going to be starting again soon. This program rewards customer service employees for a job well done.

Sports Market

Tiffany reported on the following:

- **Kansas 4A State Basketball Championship** – Tiffany stated that the Salina 4A Basketball Task Force is recruiting table workers for the tournament being held March 7-10 at the Salina Bicentennial Center.
- **JUCO Blast** – Tiffany announced that the Sponsorship Task Force has secured \$23,000 for the JUCO Blast with 80 businesses participating. A search for three more game officials is in progress. The Entertainment Task Force is working to secure half-time acts for the tournament. T-shirts for the tournament are being printed by Commercial Signs. The program book is now being put together. New this year will be a volunteer recognition night slated for Friday, March 23 at the 6:00pm game and we are working on that list of names.
- **NJCAA Annual Meeting** – Tiffany will be attending the NJCAA Annual Meeting in Tucson, AZ April 2. We will again be hosting a banquet at the meeting.
- **Salina Homebuilders Home & Garden Show** – The Home & Garden show will be held February 9-11 at the Salina Bicentennial Center. The Chamber will have a booth there promoting the JUCO Blast.
- **AMBUCS Sports & Leisure Living Show** – This event will be held at the Salina Bicentennial Center March 2-4. The Chamber will also have a booth there promoting the upcoming JUCO Blast.
- **4A State High School Wrestling** – The state wrestling championship will be held at the Salina Bicentennial Center February 23-24. We are in the process of enlisting volunteers to sell T-shirts, programs and brackets for this event.
- **Kansas Youth Soccer** – A new to Salina event, the Kansas Youth Soccer Association, will be holding their annual meeting at the Courtyard by Marriott March 29-30. Dave Oderkirk is the Salina contact for this event. This event is expected to grow in the future, but may be one that moves around the state.
- **Play Kansas** – Tiffany met with the Play Kansas coalition, which was organized to promote Kansas as a sports destination. Last year, Tiffany attended the TEAMS conference in Florida where organizations that are looking for sites can gather information from across the country. This event also lends itself to other outlets for sporting events. This year the TEAMS conference will be held in Louisville, KY where Play Kansas members will be going as attendees and not working a booth as they did last year.

Tourism Market

Sylvia gave the following reports:

Group Market:

- TIAK & KTI – Sylvia will be attending the TIAK legislative event in Topeka February 7-8. There will be seminars, a grab & go breakfast for legislators, and a TIAK board meeting. Dick Carter will be presenting a program on what KTI is all about. (A handout was distributed.) Their primary reason is to be able to go to the legislature with a comprehensive plan for tourism in Kansas. It will be a combination of things and there will be a broad-based involvement of tourism entities. Sen. Nick Jordan, who co-chairs the Senate Commerce Committee, is the torch carrier. The Task Force meets this week in Topeka. Anyone can receive updates by going to KTI's website at www.thekti.net. The January news conference held in the Capitol went very well and the press picked up on it.
- I-70 Association – Sylvia attended an I-70 meeting in Topeka and announced that they are working on a new brochure with a new look and expanded advertising. They will participate in a Denver travel show March 2-4.
- ABA – Sylvia attended the ABA marketplace in Grapevine, TX January 27-29. She reported that appointments were down and she is now doing follow-ups. We co-oped with Hays and Hutchinson to participate in an ad in the Convention Daily. The big buzz is the opening of the Salt Mine in Hutchinson. Salina has always co-oped with Hays and Hutchinson in the past but we are now looking at opening it up and doing circle tours including Wichita, Dodge City and others.
- Bank Travel Marketplace – Sylvia will be attending the Bank Travel Marketplace in Jacksonville, FL next week and she is lining up appointments for that.
- Kansas Adventure Times III is discussing rotation of shows, with each city going on behalf of all saving time and money.

Statistics:

- Sylvia reported that the Salina lodging receipts for 2006 topped \$19 million. Based on the Smith Travel Report (STR), our December average daily rate was up 6.4%; occupancy was up 9.5%; and the RevPar was up 16.7 %, which is 8.8% over last year. Transient Guest Tax was 20% over 2005.

Other:

- Sylvia and Dennis Lauver participated in a Way Finding signage meeting. Sylvia believes that the committee has done a great job in trying to tell a story about Salina and believes the proposed signage is very effective. A report to the City Commission is scheduled in February.
- Sylvia, Don Weiser and Amy Hall, all of the Chamber, are part of task forces being set up to look at all Chamber publications for revamping. Kathy Tolbert agreed to be on the task force. Sylvia is compiling examples of other publications to consider. Salina Downtown, Inc. and the Way Finding committee along with the Chamber are all working toward a "Salina look." A report will be given on their progress at the next meeting.
- Sylvia reported that Kansas Commodities, that had a booth at the No Till on the Plains conference, left us copies of their publication in which Murray Gorman of Capers Café & Bakery was featured as an award winner for using Kansas wheat in his products. Murray was also elected to the Chamber Board of Directors this year.
- No Till on the Plains – Sylvia reported that last year's attendance at the No Till conference was 1,300, and the expected drop due to the loss of grant funding only amounted to 300. There was a large drop in walk-ins from 300-400 to 60 this year. The fee for attending the show was \$200. The organizers of the show were very pleased with everything and have committed to two more years.
- Sylvia announced that there is a position open on the Convention & Tourism Advisory Committee and asked for referrals.

Committee Discussion

Keith Rawlings stated that this is the Salina Bicentennial Center's busiest time of the year. Tickets for the PBR were sagging early on but rallied the last week of sales and a great turnout is expected. Coming up next is the Salina Homebuilders Home & Garden Show, the MercyMe & Audio Adrenalin concert, KSHSAA 4A Wrestling Tournament, AMBUCS Sports & Leisure Living Show, KSHSAA 4A Boys & Girls Basketball Tournament, Mid-America Farm Show, JUCO Blast, and the Cagerz. Cagerz tickets will be on sale in late February. The scoreboard has all the approvals and funding but are still waiting on one ad agreement. Bids were awarded locally for the signage.

Mark Harmon said that they are working on some different angles for the Leadsled Car Show this July. They are in the process of trying to raise funding for the event.

Kathy Tolbert announced that the new exhibit in the Earl Bane Gallery, "Muscle in the Museum," opened January 27. There are nine cars in the exhibit and she thanked Roger Morrison for his contribution as curator. The Zoo is also taking orders for their Valentine's Day Baby Cakes. Kathy also related that they are conducting interviews for a new marketing development director for Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure.

Abner Perney stated that the City Commission is looking at a comprehensive plan to address the Kenwood Park/Oakdale Park venues. The Commission is looking at what other communities have done and asked for any input.

Rosie Leek said a mailing from her business was sent to her clients that live up to 50 miles from Salina. She thanked the Chamber for their brochure input and said others could contribute to future mailings if they would like.

Ben Vidricksen gave a report on the Kansas Day event in Topeka. He said that Salina was really in the spotlight. Approximately 700 people attended the birthday party.

Next Meeting

The next Convention & Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting will be held March 6 at the Chamber.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26am.